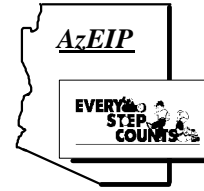


Chapter 6



COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Arizona Early Intervention Program

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6.0.0 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)

6.1.0 Authority: 20 U.S.C. §1431; 34 CFR §303.360-361 and 303.380-382.

6.2.0 Policy**6.2.1 Overview**

DES/AzEIP coordinates and maintains a comprehensive system of personnel development known as the AzEIP Professional Development System, which directly coordinates with the Continuous Monitoring and Quality Improvement System (Chapter 2) and the Technical Assistance System (Chapter 5). The AzEIP Professional Development System:

1. provides for inservice and preservice training to be conducted on an interdisciplinary basis, to the extent appropriate;
2. provides training for a variety of personnel needed to meet the requirements of Part C; and
3. ensures that the training provided relates specifically to:
 - A. Understanding the basic components of the early intervention system in Arizona;
 - B. Meeting the interrelated social or emotional, health, developmental, and educational needs of children who are AzEIP eligible; and
 - C. Assisting families to enhance the development of their children by their full participation in development and implementation of Individualized Family Service Plans.

6.2.2 AzEIP Service Providing Agencies

DES/AzEIP and the AzEIP service providing agencies:

1. Support coordinated in-service training and continuing professional development opportunities to ensure that the early intervention personnel, whether employed or contracted, are appropriately knowledgeable and skilled in the delivery of early intervention services, and understand the basic components and requirements of AzEIP.
2. Establish and maintain consistent, statewide personnel qualifications for all employed or contracted early intervention providers.
3. Monitor early intervention programs and contractors through the Continuous Quality Improvement and Monitoring System to ensure consistent, statewide adherence to the personnel requirements.
4. Use a flexible combination of methods to ensure that personnel are trained, by collaborating to:
 - A. Provide training directly to personnel.
 - B. Develop and share training across agencies.

- C. Contract with knowledgeable individuals or organizations to provide training.
- D. Sponsor or endorse existing conferences or training events that promote the knowledge and skills of early intervention personnel and/or the awareness and understanding of AzEIP.

6.2.3 General Supervision

1. DES/AzEIP monitors compliance with the Professional Development System requirements through the Continuous Monitoring and Quality Improvement System and implements Corrective Action Plans when a program or agency has not complied with the requirements.
2. AzEIP's Technical Assistance System also coordinates with the Professional Development System, providing ongoing guidance and assistance to early intervention professionals to enhance their knowledge, confidence, and performance.

6.2.4 Preservice Professional Preparation

1. The AzEIP Professional Development System promotes varied approaches to extend the appropriate knowledge, skills, and understanding of AzEIP to preservice professional preparation programs. The AzEIP Professional Development System provides technical assistance and guidance to assist universities and college programs to successfully integrate the identified requirements for professional knowledge, skills, and understanding of AzEIP into course work and curricula.
2. Pre-service training programs may request approval from DES/AzEIP to offer a pre-service training program as a mechanism to fulfill certain AzEIP Standards of Practice requirements. (See Section 6.4.0 for information about the Standards of Practice) Upon completion, graduates of AzEIP-approved pre-service training programs will have satisfied the agreed-upon requirements for the AzEIP Standards of Practice.

6.2.5 Collaboration with Part B

1. DES/AzEIP's professional development system is consistent with the comprehensive personnel development system for Part B, as appropriate.
2. DES/AzEIP and ADE work jointly to ensure consistent training for Part C and Part B personnel on the requirements of the Transition Intergovernmental Agreement and the Child Find Intergovernmental Agreement.

6.3.0 Personnel Qualifications Policy

6.3.1 General

1. AzEIP personnel qualifications apply to personnel who are providing early intervention services to children and their families.
2. The personnel qualifications include two components: educational qualifications and the Standards of Practice and are established for the following personnel categories:
 - A. Core team members: developmental specialists; occupational therapists; physical therapists; service coordinators; and speech-language pathologists.
 - B. Other team members: psychologists, social workers, and other Part C early intervention service providers.
3. The State of Arizona maintains professional licensure, certification, and/or registration for many of the disciplines used in the provision of early intervention services. This licensure, certification, and/or registration is independent of AzEIP.

6.3.2 Core Team Members

1. Educational qualifications for developmental specialists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, service coordinators, and speech-language pathologists include the following requirements:
 - A. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education, Family Studies, Speech-Language Pathology, Physical Therapy, or Occupational Therapy; or
 - B. A Bachelor's degree in a closely related field with review of coursework and approval by AzEIP; or
 - C. For developmental specialists and service coordinators, if hired in the AzEIP system as a developmental specialist or service coordinator before July 1, 2001, documentation of continued satisfactory work in the AzEIP system in the same position (i.e., developmental specialist or service coordinator) from the date of hire.
2. When a core team member is employed or contracted as a professional to deliver services for which the State of Arizona has enacted or authorized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements through legislation or practice act, the core team member shall also meet the proscribed professional requirements and rules of professional conduct for that discipline or profession.
 - A. Occupational Therapist (OT) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners to practice occupational therapy.

- B. Physical Therapist (PT) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona State Board of Physical Therapy to practice physical therapy.
 - C. Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona Department of Health Services to practice as a Speech-Language Pathologist. (If a speech-language pathologist is completing a clinical fellowship year (CFY), he or she must possess a valid, temporary Arizona license and documentation of an approved supervision plan under a Speech-Language Pathologist who has a current, valid Arizona license and the American Speech and Hearing Association Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC)).
3. The roles and responsibilities of core team members implementing the AzEIP team-based model require independence and the ability to make changes with the families to the recommendations and strategies for the family to achieve their outcomes. Individuals are responsible for knowing and complying with the AzEIP personnel qualifications as provided in these policies, including complying with and maintaining any applicable State or other licensure requirement.

6.3.3 Other Team Members

- 1. When a team member is employed or contracted as a professional to deliver services for which the State of Arizona has enacted or authorized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements through legislation or practice act, the team member shall also meet the proscribed professional requirements and rules of professional conduct for that discipline or profession.

6.3.4 Ongoing Efforts to Recruit Personnel

- 1. The State of Arizona makes ongoing good-faith efforts to recruit and hire appropriately and adequately trained personnel to support families of children who are AzEIP eligible. In geographic areas of the State where there are significant, documented shortages of personnel that meet the State's qualifications, hiring the most qualified personnel available who are making satisfactory progress toward completing the Bachelor's degree requirements is permitted in those exceptional circumstances under the following conditions:
 - A. Documentation of the efforts to hire qualified personnel shall be submitted to AzEIP for review and for approval to hire someone who does not meet the AzEIP personnel qualifications.
 - B. The employer or contractor, along with the individual, shall develop and complete a written plan to obtain the course work necessary to meet the Bachelor's degree requirement within three years from the date of hire into the AzEIP system and submits to AzEIP for review and approval;
 - B. The documentation of the individual's progress in completing the plan shall be annually reviewed and updated by the employer/contractor with

documentation maintained in the personnel file to continue employment/contracting;

- C. While in the process of completing the requirements of the Bachelor's degree and/or AzEIP Standards of Practice, the employer/contractor shall review quarterly, at a minimum, 10% of the service coordinator's caseload using the Child File Audit tool, in order to maintain quality assurance; and
 - D. A final evaluation of the individual's knowledge of early intervention and skills in delivering early intervention services will be conducted if he/she has not completed the degree requirement at the end of the three year period from the initial hire date. This evaluation shall consider the documentation of job performance; demonstration of annual progress in completing the degree plan; individual circumstance which prohibits the completion of the degree plan; and passing scores on the AzEIP Standards of Practice tests and attendance at the AzEIP Policies and Professionalism training. Should the employer/contractor determine that individual should be retained, the employer/contractor may apply to the DES/AzEIP office for an extension to complete the Bachelor's degree to retain the individual.
 - E. All of the above documentation shall be maintained in the individual's personnel file to be reviewed during monitoring.
- 2. The above provision shall not enable the State or any of its providers to hire or employ individuals in positions requiring professional licensure, certification, or registration, unless they comply with the licensure, certification, or registration requirements appropriate for their field.

6.4.0 Standards of Practice

6.4.1. General Policy

- 1. The AzEIP Standards of Practice describes the knowledge and skills necessary for effective early intervention service. The knowledge component involves individuals demonstrating knowledge in three content areas (see Section 6.4.3), which provides a foundation for early intervention practice. The skills component ensures ongoing professional development for early intervention practitioners, which includes the application of skills to support and enhance an individuals' continued growth and learning.
- 2. Core team have three years from the date of hire into early intervention in Arizona to complete the knowledge and skills components of the Standards of Practice.
- 3. Other team members (i.e., non-core team members) may complete the Standards of Practice, but are not required.
- 4. After completion of the knowledge and skills components of the Standards of Practice, a Certificate of Completion for the Standards of Practice will be issued to the individual, a copy of which must remain in the individual's personnel file.

6.4.2 Procedures

1. AzEIP programs or contractors maintain the personnel files for their employees or contractors who provide early intervention services to document that they meet all current professional and AzEIP personnel qualifications. Individuals are responsible for knowing and complying with the AzEIP personnel qualifications as provided in these policies, including complying with and maintaining any applicable State or other licensure requirements.
2. All AzEIP service providing agencies are required to ensure the completion of the Personnel File Audit (PFA) for their early intervention personnel, whether employed or contracted, under the requirements of the monitoring system. The PFA includes components to monitor compliance with the AzEIP Standards of Practice for early intervention personnel. *See Chapter 2, Monitoring.*

6.4.3 Knowledge Component Policy

1. Core team members demonstrate knowledge in the following content areas:
 - A. Child and Family (includes early childhood development and developmental risks in child development for children ages, birth to three, and the family context that supports development).
 - B. Initial Planning Process and the Individualized Family Service Plan (IPP/IFSP) (includes the principles and practice of referral, evaluation, intervention, ongoing assessment, and transition for children and families from the early intervention program).
 - C. Policies and Professionalism (includes information about federal laws governing early intervention and how those laws are implemented in Arizona).
2. Demonstration of knowledge may be completed by the following methods:
 - A. Child and Family and the Initial Planning Process and Individualized Family Service Plan: pass the test or complete the approved early intervention coursework through Northern Arizona University or Arizona State University.
 - B. Policies and Professionalism: complete the training.
3. An individual may take the test for the Child and Family or the IPP/IFSP AzEIP Standards of Practice modules up to three times within a one-year period.

6.4.4 Procedures

1. To register for a Standards of Practice test or training, individuals contact the AzEIP Staff Development Training Project at Northern Arizona University, Institute for Human Development (NAU). (www.nau.edu/ihd/asdtp; tel: 1-928-523-8131)

2. Study guides are available by contacting NAU.
3. If accommodations are needed for a test, an individual should submit the request in writing with the supporting documentation in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Documentation should be submitted to NAU.
4. After completion of a test or training, NAU issues a Certificate of Completion for the specific content area.
5. An individual may also complete approved early intervention coursework at Northern Arizona University or Arizona State University, at which time the university will issue the Certificate.

6.4.5 Skills Component Policy

1. The skills component consists of an apprenticeship/mentorship, which requires core team members to develop a Professional Development Plan. The Plan includes goals for the individuals and activities to meet those goals.
2. An individual may begin the apprenticeship/mentorship after completion of the Policies and Professionalism training.
3. Completion of the apprenticeship/mentorship is monitored through the Continuous Quality Improvement and Monitoring system, which includes the review of personnel files for documentation of the Plan.

6.4.6 Procedures

1. To satisfy the skills component of the Standards of Practice, an individual, after completion of the Policies and Professionalism training, completes the Professional Practice Guide and develops a Professional Development Plan. These documents shall be available by contacting NAU.
2. The individual then notifies NAU that the apprenticeship/mentorship has begun. The individual works with his/her supervisor or a colleague for a minimum of six months on the goals of the Professional Development Plan. Upon completion, the individual notifies NAU of the completion date.
3. The Professional Development Plan and documentation of the ongoing activities related to the objectives on the Plan remain in the personnel file to be verified through the Continuous Quality Improvement and Monitoring System.

6.4.7 Practice Guidelines

1. Professionals are encouraged to create or join study groups for the Standards of Practice test, using the study guides from NAU's website.
2. Early intervention practitioners are expected to maintain updated personnel information on NAU's website, as well as, in their personnel file.

3. Ongoing support for early intervention agencies and programs is provided through the Technical Assistance System, including the efforts of the Technical Assistance and Monitoring Specialists and the TA Cadre. See Chapter 5, *Technical Assistance System*.
4. The apprenticeship may be completed with a colleague, a mentor, an individual's supervisor, or as a group activity with other early intervention professionals.
4. As part of the on-going, continuous professional development in early intervention, all core team members are encouraged to participate in regular meetings and/or conferencing with team members, or other forms of mentorship, collegial support, and/or supervision.
5. If employed or contracted as a professional in a discipline which is not a licensed, registered, or certified profession (e.g., developmental specialist), the practitioner is encouraged to maintain active and on-going professional development activities, as required and supported under current contract or employment with an AzEIP participating agency or otherwise.

6.5.0 Program Registration

6.5.1 Policy

1. Programs and agencies register with AzEIP annually and update that information bi-annually, as needed. Independent contractors will register as a program under their name.
2. The program registration includes completing contact information and a personnel table of those individuals who are employees or contractors with the program.

6.5.2 Procedures

1. Programs, agencies, and individuals register and update information through NAU's website.
2. NAU will send notification for the annual registration and the 6-month updates, reminding registrants of the need to complete/update the program's information.